



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
RFI-2014-0409**

**CASCADES INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE
OPPORTUNITIES**

**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Release Date: April 9, 2014

Information Due Date and Time
April 30, 2014 12:00 PM Noon Pacific Time

The RFI Coordinator is the **SOLE POINT OF CONTACT**. All communication between Responders and WSDOT or ODOT shall be with the RFI Coordinator.

Jolena Missildine, RFQQ Coordinator
Phone: 360-705-7548
Email: missildj@wsdot.wa.gov



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Cascades Intercity Passenger Rail Service Opportunities

I. Introduction

The purpose of this announcement is to gather information from providers of rail services about service delivery options to provide more convenient, rapid, and reliable intercity passenger rail service between Vancouver, British Columbia and Eugene, Oregon. These submittals are not responses to deliver the service but will be used to identify potential efficiency improvements to the Cascades Intercity Passenger Rail Service.

II. Statement of Need

Washington and Oregon currently contract with Amtrak and other service partners to provide a quality intercity passenger rail service that customers value with clean, safe, reliable travel; and comfort and convenience, including amenities such as Wi-Fi and food and beverage service. At the same time, rising costs and increasing budget constraints require the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to minimize the financial impact to the states while continuing to achieve transportation goals. The states are requesting opportunities for cost reduction and developing priorities based on what will generate the best value relative to the resources required in a manner that will:

- Provide an efficient, safe, and cost-effective alternative to highway, bus, and air travel;
- Support future growth of intercity passenger rail service on the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor between Vancouver, British Columbia and Eugene, Oregon;
- Operate an efficient, high-quality intercity passenger rail service that help minimize the need for state subsidies;
- Provide flexibility for WSDOT and ODOT to manage service amenities and business costs;
- Be sensitive to community and environmental impacts; and
- Integrate with local roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation networks.

III. Background

The Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor is one of 11 corridors designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation for high-speed intercity passenger rail service. The service has been an increasingly strong component of the Pacific Northwest's intermodal transportation system since the Amtrak Cascades' inaugural run in 1994. In its 18 years of operation, the service has increased the number of daily scheduled trips to 11; extended its geographic reach from Eugene, Oregon to Vancouver, British Columbia; and grown the annual ridership from 180,209 in 1994 to more than 800,000 in 2013. The service is currently operated by Amtrak and funded by the states of Oregon and Washington.

WSDOT and ODOT signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on March 7, 2012. This MOU committed the two agencies to the concept of joint operation of the service as



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a single corridor. The near-term focus is to prepare for the significant changes from the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). ODOT and WSDOT are working to pool resources for increased efficiencies and reduced costs in order to manage the most immediate challenges.

Information Requested – Service Operations and Options

See Exhibit A for a full description.

WSDOT and ODOT are interested in receiving information from providers of rail services, including, but not limited to: train crews, train maintenance, on-board food and beverage, ticketing, and support personnel for the operation of passenger trains that could operate or provide some types of services for the Cascades Intercity Passenger Rail Service. Ability to work with the Class 1 railroads that are owners of the infrastructure that hosts intercity passenger rail service is a requirement. Safe, reliable, on-time services are corridor priorities.

More information can be found on the Cascades service at <http://Amtrakcascades.com>, <http://wsdot.wa.gov/rail> and http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/RAIL/pages/passenger_rail.aspx

IV. Request for Information Process

After a review of the RFI responses and assessment of the marketplace, the WSDOT may or may not choose to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP). Participation in the RFI process is not a requirement for any subsequent competitive procurement, although the results of this RFI may be used to build and refine an RFP. WSDOT reserves the right to refrain from issuing an RFP or any other formal solicitation document for this product. This RFI is not a formal solicitation and no contract will be awarded as a result.

V. RFI Schedule

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Release RFI | Wednesday, April 9 2014 |
| Providers Questions Due by 12:00 p.m. noon (local time) | Wednesday, April 16, 2014 |
| Response to Providers Questions Due by 4:00 p.m. (local time) | Monday, April 21, 2014 |
| Provider Responses Due by 12:00 p.m. noon (local time) | Wednesday, April 30, 2014 |



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*WSDOT reserves the right to revise the above timeline.

VI. RFI Coordinator

Providers communications concerning this RFI should be directed to the RFI Coordinator listed below.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| RFI Coordinator | Jolena Missildine |
| Address | Washington State Department of Transportation Administrative Contracts Office P.O. Box 47408 Olympia, WA 98504-7408 |
| Phone | (360) 705-7548 |
| E-mail | missildj@wsdot.wa.gov |

VII. Response Preparation Instructions

WSDOT requests that providers respond with formatting provided in **Exhibit A—Providers Response** and any preprinted materials that would provide the information requested.

Providers are to provide responses in an electronic format such as Adobe Acrobat or Microsoft Word. **All communications must reference the RFI acquisition number RFI-2014-0409 in the subject or title area.**

Responses to this RFI should be submitted to the RFI Coordinator no later than 12:00 p.m. noon (local time) on April 30, 2014. Please do not cut and paste your responses into this RFI. Instead, provide your response on Exhibit A and any separate documents or materials. Include numbers referencing the RFI section to which you are responding. Only one electronic copy need be submitted.

Please submit responses to the RFI Coordinator. The RFI Coordinator may email an acknowledgement of receipt to the submitting Providers.

VIII. Cost of Response Preparation

Providers will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with preparing or presenting any response to this RFI.



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IX. Response Property of WSDOT

All materials submitted in response to this RFI become the property of the WSDOT. WSDOT has the right to use any of the ideas presented in any response to the RFI. Selection or rejection of a response does not affect this right.

X. Public Records and Proprietary Information

Any information contained in the response that is proprietary or confidential must be clearly designated. Marking of the entire submission as proprietary or confidential will be rejected as non-responsive.

To the extent consistent with chapter 42.56 RCW, the Public Disclosure Act, WSDOT shall maintain the confidentiality of Provider's information marked confidential or proprietary. If a request is made to view Provider's proprietary information, WSDOT will notify Providers of the request and of the date that the records will be released to the requester unless Providers obtains a court order enjoining that disclosure. If Providers fails to obtain the court order enjoining disclosure, WSDOT will release the requested information on the date specified.

WSDOT's sole responsibility shall be limited to maintaining the above data in a secure area and to notify Providers of any request(s) for disclosure for so long as WSDOT retains Provider's information in WSDOT records per state law. Failure to so label such materials or failure to timely respond after notice of request for public disclosure has been given shall be deemed a waiver by Providers of any claim that such materials are exempt from disclosure.

XI. Providers Comments and Questions

Providers may submit comments and questions to the RFI Coordinator prior to responding to the RFI by the date indicated in the RFI schedule in Section IV. Responses to provider questions will be considered addendums to the RFI. Modifications to the RFI that may result from Providers comments will be sent to all Providers. Where there appears to be a conflict between the RFI and any amendment or addenda issued, the last amendment or addendum issued will prevail.

XII. Selection of Providers

At its sole discretion, WSDOT will select providers to meet with based on materials and information provided. Providers will be notified by mail whether they have or have not been selected to discuss information provided. Be aware that no contract will be issued from any information provided as part of this Request for Information.



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Exhibit A

Information Requested – Service Operations and Options

The effort to introduce competition into existing intercity passenger rail corridors will confront serious challenges. The Cascades corridor staff is interested in receiving expert opinion from interested providers of passenger train services and other stakeholders on strategies for managing costs and improving service. These include, but are not limited to, liability coverage and insurance arrangements; negotiations on access to freight owned track; managing labor relations in a fair manner; the smooth transfer of equipment and facilities and minimal qualifications for intercity passenger corridor operators. The team is also interested in general opinion and comment on best practice guidelines and standards for a modern procurement model for intercity corridor passenger services that will move the process in a manner that is complete, but efficient, fair, and cost effective for all parties.

WSDOT and ODOT are interested in receiving information from providers of rail services, including, but not limited to: train crews, train maintenance, on-board food and beverage, ticketing, and support personnel for the operation of passenger trains that could operate or provide some types of services for the Cascades Intercity Passenger Rail Service. Ability to work with the Class 1 railroads that are owners of the infrastructure that hosts intercity passenger rail service is a requirement. Safe, reliable, on-time services are corridor priorities.

Rail providers with ideas about efficiency improvements and cost reductions are encouraged to submit a brief letter of interest, up to 5 pages, that addresses the following:

- A brief background of the firm and areas of expertise. Specify whether the firm is currently a provider of rail service.
- Recommendations with discussion about anticipated feasibility for state supported service within the structure of PRIIA.
- Contact information for individual(s) who would respond to requests for additional information.